

ROUTING

Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Tuesday February 1, 1977

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Tuesday, February 1, 1977.

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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SYRIA-LEBANON-ISRAEL: Situation Report

25X1 [] //Syria has apparently stepped up its military preparedness. The Syrian action probably was taken because of the tense situation resulting from Syrian troop movements in southern Lebanon near the Israeli border. []

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[] Syrian forces have been placed on increased readiness, and some reservists of the regular army and the Palestine Liberation Army were recalled to duty late last week.//

25X1 [] //Military activity [] observed in the Damascus area and a portion of the Golan Heights over the weekend tends to support this report, but we have detected no Syrian troop movements into Lebanon in recent days.//

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25X1 [] //Israel continues to monitor the situation in Lebanon, but apparently has not yet taken any military measures in response to the situation there or in Syria. The US defense attache in Tel Aviv traveled through northern Israel and the Golan Heights on Sunday and saw no unusual activity.//

25X1 [] //The Israelis have held high-level meetings recently on the Lebanon situation and probably have drawn up contingency plans for any show of military readiness that is needed. []

YUGOSLAVIA: Rivals for Tito's Mantle

25X1 [] The Yugoslav party Presidium yesterday gave key posts in the preparations for the next party congress to the bitter rivals for Tito's mantle as party leader. The move will result in a test of strength that may well determine who succeeds Tito.

25X1 [] Party executive committee secretary Stane Dolanc will be in charge of congress preparations and will head the highly important subcommittee on cadre matters. This post will enable Dolanc to build a personal power base in the party hierarchy.

25X1 [] Tito, however, also designated Jure Bilic, a nominal subordinate to Dolanc who in fact tries to undercut him at

every opportunity, as head of another sensitive working group. Bilic has responsibility for drafting both the new party statute and a document on party organizational matters.

25X1 [] While Bilic is likely to use both jobs to challenge Dolanc, his organizational responsibility offers him an unparalleled opportunity to undermine his rival. []

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25X1 [] The stage has thus been set for some stormy in-fighting before the congress meets next year. Dolanc is clearly stronger than Bilic at this stage, but their new assignments might well force uncommitted party leaders to choose sides. Dolanc will be pressed to build a consensus behind him or face political oblivion.

25X1 [] The assignments appear to be a maneuver by Tito to force the party to settle on a successor without appearing to have made the choice himself. The 84-year-old leader--who celebrates his 40th year as head of the party this year--nevertheless still is capable of engineering his own succession. He can now do so from a polite distance by merely resolving conflicts that occur over congress preparations. []

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Dissidents

25X1 [] Prague television on Saturday denied Western press speculation that the regime plans to expel several prominent dissidents. It called the charge that Czechoslovakia wants forcibly to deport the dissidents an unsolicited move designed to "conjure up ghosts."

25X1 [] Czechoslovak-Austrian diplomatic contacts on this issue last week coincided with a Czechoslovak media campaign suggesting that the dissidents might be happier in the West. Last Friday, six of the signers of the Charter 77 human rights manifesto reportedly were summoned to the Prague passport office and asked to sign emigration applications. All refused.

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[redacted] In an important new twist to the campaign of intimidation, two of the leading spokesmen for Charter 77 were warned by the prosecutor general yesterday that both the manifesto and their defense of it are illegal. This is the first time the regime has officially declared that the document and activity connected with it are contrary to Czechoslovak law. This suggests the authorities are now prepared to levy criminal charges against those who continue to agitate.

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[redacted] The US embassy meanwhile reports that the Charter 77 group is continuing to press its case. The number of signatories, according to spokesmen for the group, has now passed 400. The text of the manifesto is now reportedly being distributed outside of Prague, where some interrogations have reportedly taken place. [redacted]

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BOLIVIA: Revised Narcotics Laws

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[] A major revision in Bolivia's stiff narcotics laws may result in speedier justice for a number of US citizen being held in local jails.

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[] The most significant change in the new decree reduces the minimum prison term for simple possession of narcotics from ten years to two. Because of the harsh mandatory penalties under the previous law, many Bolivian judges were reluctant to sentence prisoners convicted of minor offenses. Offenders nevertheless were sometimes subjected to prolonged periods of detention.

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[] Judicial procedures have also been simplified, and specific time limits have been set for completion of various trial stages. Some convicted US citizens, for example, have been awaiting sentencing for as long as three years. By contrast, a period of one year from arrest to sentencing is the average in Mexico and Colombia, where many US citizens also have been arrested on narcotics charges.

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[] The revised law will not help prisoners who face more serious charges. The penalties for transporting or manufacturing drugs, for instance, have been maintained or even increased and now range up to 25 years. []

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USSR-JAPAN: Party Relations

25X1 [] //The Soviets are making halting progress in
25X1 healing their 12-year breach with the independent-minded Japanese Communist Party, but the effort could still come to naught.

[]

25X1 [] The Communists make up the smallest of Japan's opposition parties; it took a severe beating in the election last month. It sees itself as an independent party like the Italian and French communist parties and would like to put its currently frigid relations with the Soviet party on at least as good a footing as those of other independent communist parties.

25X1 [] Relations between the Soviets and the Japanese Communists were severed in 1964 when the Japanese Communist Party, which was then pro-Chinese, expelled presidium member Yoshio Shiga for supporting the partial nuclear test ban treaty, which the Japanese party had opposed. Since then, periodic reconciliation attempts have foundered. Japanese Communists have criticized Soviet actions, and the Soviets have supported Shiga and courted the Marxist Japanese Socialists, the largest opposition party.

25X1 [] //The latest reconciliation attempt came as a result of a Soviet initiative, prompted in part by Moscow's desire to improve its standing with Asian communists and in part by its anger with the Japanese Socialists, who now seem to be leaning toward Peking.

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